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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,346	11/25/2003	Min Jin Oh	0465-1088P	3904

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EXAMINER

HECKERT, JASON MARK

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1746

DATE MAILED: 09/26/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/720,346

Applicant(s)

OH ET AL.

Examiner

Jason Heckert

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is not clear whether "position" (page 14) refers to the location of the washing machine with respect to the dryer, or the location of the control panels. Please rewrite distinctly claiming the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claim 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schober in Canadian Patent No. 2330236. Schober shows a washing machine 10 and a dryer 12 in a side-by-side position. Each apparatus has a control panel 48 for controlling the apparatus. Schober depicts the panel on the dryer in symmetry with the panel on the washing machine in Figure 2. By definition, a control panel is connected to a controlling part for machine operation. In regards to claim 9, Schober clearly shows

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the control panels positioned on the top of both the washing machine and dryer in Figure 2.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton. Schober includes a control panel, but does not specially disclose the user input and output configuration. Various input methods and output devices are common and used throughout the art, including buttons. Cotton discloses a control panel for an appliance, specifically a washing machine, which has buttons 29 for inputting commands. The buttons constitute a touch pad. It also contains a display 32. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to modify Schober and include buttons on the control panel for easy input of user commands. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, Schober discloses panels unique to each apparatus; therefore each panel controls functions unique to the apparatus to which it is designated when the user applies a command.

7. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton and further in view of Ripley et al. As described above, Schober discloses a control panel and Cotton discloses buttons on a panel. Neither specifically

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mentions the use of a knob. Knobs are conventionally used throughout the art to select different courses for a washer or dryer. Ripley et al. teach such a knob 34. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to include such a knob with the panels taught by Schober and the buttons taught by Cotton in order to allow for the selection of a course of action for the washing machine or dryer.

8. Claim 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton and further in view of Broker et al. As described above, Schober discloses a control panel and Cotton discloses buttons on a panel. Neither specifically mentions the use of a liquid display device. Liquid display devices are common and cannot be considered novel. Broker et al. disclose the use of a liquid crystal display screen that is capable of receiving input parameters (col. 2 line 30-31). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to include such a liquid display device on the panels disclosed by Schober with the buttons taught by Cotton in order to display the selected processes and status of the machine as well as provide an alternative means for user input as taught by Broker.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jason Heckert whose telephone number is (571) 272-2702. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Friday, 8:00 - 5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Barr can be reached on (571)272-1414. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JMH

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Barr', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MICHAEL BARR
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER